

South Precinct Email Community Newsletter
July 7, 2008



Dear Community Friends,

Burglaries

I had been gone about four hours and when I returned home one day following an appointment. As I entered and looked at how my dining room table was out of place and the cabinet drawers were open, I thought, "I didn't leave it like this, did I?" As I looked in my office area and found things off the shelves and on the floor, I thought, "How did *this* happen?" It wasn't until I went in the bedroom and found that the jewelry boxes had been upended on the bed that I realized I had been burglarized. Forced entry through a locked rear door inside a locked fenced in yard. They stole jewelry, a laptop, my digital cable box, digital camera, cash, DVDs... and they took food out of my freezer.

It Can Happen To Anybody: Don't Blame Yourself

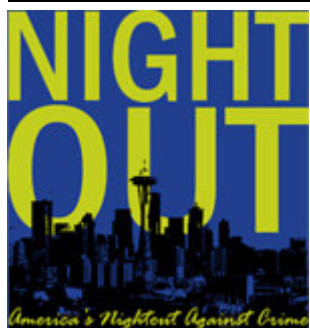
I understand that queasy feeling that surfaces when you realize that your space has been violated, that someone came into your home, rifled through your dresser drawers and took your stuff. I know first hand the second-guessing, the questioning and the self-blaming. "If only I had done ____." "Why didn't I ____?" You have to admit, it is ironic that the crime prevention guy, the one that hammers you with home security tips, gets his place broken in to. It does go to show that; 1) it could happen to anyone, 2) If you have already taken precautions to improve home security, there may be some things you haven't considered (the BB gun used to break the double-pane glass of the rear door was a new one for me; one that I've seen a few times since my burglary), and 3) further improvements could be made.

And since I know you're wondering, I also waited 3 ½ hours for an officer to respond. The crime was not in progress, there were no witnesses, and there was no suspect information. With other things going on in the Precinct, my non-emergency call could wait.

What You Should Do: Lessons Learned And Reinforced From Me To You

- 1) Always lock doors and windows when away from the home.
- 2) Have a home security assessment to see what you can do to improve your home security. This is a free service. Learn from my professional and (recent) personal experience.
- 3) Take inventory of your valuable items. Make a list of the items, model number, serial number and approximate value. For items that can be engraved, put your driver's license or state ID number.
- 4) For those items that cannot be engraved, take a picture of them and have a written description of the item. Do the same with jewelry and include appraisals of the items.
- 5) Communicate with neighbors. There had been recent burglaries in the neighborhood, so alerting neighbors when an incident occurs makes everyone aware so neighbors can be more watchful.

Night Out Against Crime 2008



Speaking of communicating with neighbors, we encourage you to participate in "Night Out Against Crime 2008" on Tuesday, August 5, 2008. Night Out is a national crime prevention event designed to heighten neighborhood awareness, increase neighborhood anti-crime efforts, and unite our communities. It is a great chance to connect neighbors and share information with each other while learning more about crime prevention.

To register your block for **Night Out Against Crime 2008** on line, please use the following link: <http://www.seattle.gov/police/Nightout/default.htm>.

The 2008 event theme is partnership with the Emergency Management Office to promote the **SNAP** (Seattle **N**eighborhoods **A**ctively **P**repare) program: More information about SNAP can be found at <http://www.seattle.gov/emergency/programs/snap/>.

Until next time, Take Care and Stay Safe!

Mark Solomon, South Precinct Crime Prevention Coordinator